

*Semiothisa signaria* Hübner (Lep.:Geometridae)  
New to Britain

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I captured this moth, a ♂ in good condition (Plate XVI, fig. 3), at m.v. light in the interior of Essex in the summer of 1970. That particular night was overcast, mild with little wind and ideal for the collector, with many species coming to my light and sheet. I showed the specimen to Mr H. C. Huggins who urged me to take it to the British Museum (Nat. Hist.). Accordingly, on 12th August 1971, I submitted the moth to Mr D. J. Carter who shortly after kindly wrote me to say that his colleague Mr D. S. Fletcher had examined the specimen and identified it as *Semiothisa signaria* Hübner, a species new to the British list.

I immediately communicated the above information to the Essex Naturalists' Trust who were delighted with the discovery but asked me as a safeguard not to publish an account of it. However, in the three years that have elapsed since then and despite a light having been regularly operated in the locality, no more *signaria* have occurred. It was agreed with the Essex Trust therefore that the above facts could be published though omitting certain details.

Prout (in Seitz, *Macrolepidoptera of the World—Palearctic Region—Geometrae* (1912), 346, pl. 18g) says the moth flies in June and July and describes it as follows: "Distal margin of forewing with scarcely appreciable sinus, tooth at 3rd radial of hindwing not long, ♂ antennal serrations not very long . . . no black mark at anterior half of distal margin". He figures it in colour. The moth is also figured in colour in Kirby (*Butterflies and Moths of Europe* (1903), pl. 47, fig. 8). Hofmann (*Die Raupen der Gross-Schmetterlinge Europas* (1893), pl. 42, fig. 6) gives a coloured figure of the larva which is green with whitish lines, head reddish. It feeds on *Pinus sylvestris* in August and September. Mr D. J. Carter informed me that "the foodplant of the species in Germany was recorded as *Picea excelsa*". Chretien (in Lhomme, *Catalogue des Lepidopteres de France et de Belgique*, 1: 399) says the larva "makes a hole in the needles of pine, wriggling in almost entirely in order to nourish itself" (Chalmers-Hunt's translation).

The species has a wide distribution abroad, its range extending from France through Central Europe, Russia and beyond.

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